The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields. It contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1729 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MAY 30, 1944 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 34, NO. 22

WE PLEDGE—
1 MILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

FACING the FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

Good entertainment is so scarce in wartime that we are deeply indebted to the Communists for providing it free of charge.

The spectacle of this leopard breed desperately trying to change its spots constitutes a three-ring circus all by itself.

The entire country got a belly-laugh out of the recent burlesque convention of the Communist Party in New York City where the C.P. stripped of its tattered pretensions to being a political party and emerged in the G-String nudity of a political "association".

Then from San Francisco came the news that Harry Bridges has resorted to pleading the Communist Commander of the American Legion by denouncing wartime strikes as "treason". From his wide background of experience, Harry certainly should know treason when he sees it. But our surprise at such statements from him gave way to complete hilarity when we discovered he had also made this statement:

"We regret any hostility of labor to capital as such."

That, coming from Harry Bridges, was about all we could stand for one day without going into convulsions. No wonder Harry Landeberg calls the Bridges crew "comics"!

Going Off the Air

The announcement from NBC that the "Labor For Victory" broadcasts will be suspended for the summer was a disappointment to us and to many of the faithful listeners of these Sunday radio programs.

However, the American Federation of Labor is not going to go off the air entirely. From time to time, when the occasion warrants, we will be able to obtain time, for special programs. And, after the election is over, the Federation is planning to go back on the air with a regular series of broadcasts. It is hoped that this new series will be carried in turn by all four networks.

One thing appears certain. When the AFL returns to its broadcasting activities it will do so on its own and not in conjunction with the CIO.

When the "Labor For Victory" series started more than two years ago, joint participation with the CIO was necessary in order to obtain the time from NBC. The network, while fully cooperative, could not see its way clear toward giving each organization a weekly program. The best it felt it could do was to split the time between the AFL and the CIO, on alternate weeks.

While the programs were conducted separately, they were supposed to be devoted to the same objective—namely, to inform the public how the workers of America were helping to win the war.

Nevertheless, a disturbing element soon crept into the picture. It was discovered that some of the CIO programs contained distinctly partisan propaganda and occasionally more than a trace of the Communist Party line. For these reasons the AFL did not relish the association and had, in fact, taken steps toward a complete severance of ties with the radio field.

This will certainly be attended to come next November.

Clearing Up Confusion

Between now and next November a number of confusing situations are likely to develop with regard to the national political campaign. President Green explained the non-partisan political policy of the AFL clearly and concisely in his address before the Maryland State and District of Columbia Federation of Labor convention the other day. But several of the individual unions affiliated with the Federation undoubtedly will pursue their own policy in the campaign—a privilege to which they are entitled under the democratic setup of the Federation.

Thus, some AFL affiliates may take a strong political position in favor of a particular party or national candidate—an endorsement that does not coincide with those of the CIO Political Action Committee, while others will take an entirely opposite course.

Political disagreements of this sort have occurred in past election years within the Federation and probably will always take place so long as it remains a democratic organization. As President Green said, the AFL does not attempt to dictate to its members how they shall vote.

But we caution observers not to read too much significance into such political variations within the Federation. The boys will battle it out during the campaign and may exchange hard words. But once the election is over, such differences will disappear. The Federation has never been split on political issues and it never will.

Even the AFL unions which see eye to eye with the CIO on certain political endorsements are incontrovertibly opposed to the CIO on most other issues. It would be a serious mistake to assume that political considerations may bring about a permanent rapprochement between them. The Communist Party faction, "asserted that the same candidates as the newly formed Liberal Party but the gulf between them is impassable. The same holds true in the trade union field.

The Labor Situation In Italy

The following article by Vanni B. Moniana, Associate Editor of "Guistizia" and a leader of the Italian-American Labor Council, is reprinted from the news letter of the American Labor Conference on International Affairs.

Unless we are willing to see the labor movement of Europe to Communist control, the United States and Great Britain, together with other interested democratic countries, should reject the Communist plan already victorious in Italy and promote plans to guarantee the quickest, honest, and truly democratic reorganization of the labor movement of Europe, which will be the basic factor in the political shaping of that Continent.

In my opinion, this democratic plan, for Italy as well for other countries, should include the following points:

(1) To smash Fascist and Nazi labor unions everywhere. To call local meetings and meetings of workers to let them form their own labor unions and elect their own representatives—people belonging to their trade.

(2) To favor the creation of local and regional labor bodies, assuring them to fewer rights of self government than our Central Trades and Labor Councils and State Federations of Labor possess. In other words, apply the principle of federalism to the creation of Italian and all European labor. This principle of federalism is the only real safeguard I can see against any attempt by Communist-dominated political groups to take over control and list the leadership of labor. Remember that Communist-sponsored "unity" schemes are nothing else than totalitarian schemes.

(3) No central body of labor should be recognized or favored until the liberation of most of the country, and then only if it is the genuine expression of genuine industrial, trade, city and regional labor organizations.

We should not be fooled any longer by Communist-sponsored "unity" schemes. These schemes permit the Communists to monopolize the show and prevent or suppress any competition.

Any resistance, such as naturally, every local or regional trend to self-government should be encouraged and aided as a vital need of democracy and freedom.

Democracy needs a labor plan for Italy—and for Europe. Otherwise Italy, and Europe, are bound to pass from one kind of dictatorship to another, from one calamity to another.

This is the fundamental question to be solved. And we are very late.

LABOR HELPS INCREASE NAVY'S FLEET SIZE

Washington, D. C.—During the first 4 months of 1944 there was added to the United States Navy a total tonnage approximately equal to that already braced by the entire Naval strength as it stood less than four years ago, according to a statement made by Admiral E. L. Cochrane, Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Ships, in paying tribute to labor for its part in the Navy's war effort.

The Admiral said that 4 years ago our fighting fleet consisted of approximately 330 units, totalling about 1,300,000 tons, while supporting vessels of various types totalled approximately 680 units of about 500,000 tons.

SEABEES BATTLE JAPS WHILE BUILDING AIRFIELD

Washington, D. C.—There was no rest for the Seabees who landed with the invasion forces on Los Negros Island in the Admiralties and heavy rebuilt the Momote airfield and constructed other vital military establishments, one of the first of which was a fighter strip, eight they often laid aside construction tools and took up arms to join their U. S. Army comrades in battle.

For their outstanding courage and resolution the Seabees have been officially commended. The detachment of 400 Seabees which landed under the Stars and Stripes on Los Negros was after Army troops had seized the Momote airfield.

The first 2 nights ashore, a hundred of the Navy construction men manned the defense perimeter side by side with the Army assault troops. The Seabees repulsed three Jap attacks in their sector, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. The defenders suffered only minor casualties.

ILGWU CONVENTION OPENS IN BOSTON

Boston.—Close to 800 delegates representing more than 305,000 members organized in 262 local unions in 33 states and four Canadian provinces gathered here for the opening of the 25th Convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Deliberations are scheduled to continue through June 3.

In addition to discussions on the working conditions and contracts affecting the present membership, the convention is expected to map plans for organizing the unorganized in the industry.

David Dubinsky, president announced, in the form of chaotic labor relations —will rush in to occupy the vacuum. The American people have no desire to undergo an industrial tornado because management and labor have insisted on creating a vacuum. To me, sound collective bargaining is the natural choice to replace the government's wartime influence in the nation's industrial cosmos."

Mr. Davis emphasized statements made at the morning session of the conference by Dr. George W. Taylor, vice chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, who declared that management had a tremendous stake in making collective bargaining a permanent institution.

"It had better be permanent," Dr. Taylor said, "because of all the drives being made by the common man, the collective bargaining drive is the only one which accepts the capitalist system. If anybody thinks the workers will return to having no voice in matters that affect them he is very much mistaken."

Lloyd Garrison, another public member of the WLB, who followed Dr. Taylor, spoke of the contribution made by the board in the task of wage adjustment and the strengthening of collective bargaining, declaring that the experience accumulated by industry and labor through the board would prove a valuable guide in molding post-war employer-employee relations.

Labor's Aid To Invasion Forces Hailed On 'Victory, F.O.B.' Program

Washington, D. C.—The key to the rising tide of United Nations power and the crushing of Hitler's military prowess is the record-breaking production achievements of American labor and American industry, AFL President William Green declared in a talk broadcast over the popular "Victory F.O.B." radio program broadcast nationally by CBS.

Mr. Green's brief address was preceded by a dramatic skit which traced the progress of the workers of this country during the span of the Federation's existence and emphasized the high standards of living attained in America under the free enterprise system.

In discussing the coming invasion of occupied Europe, Mr. Green declared:

"The United Nations are riding to victory on the never-ending and always mounting stream of planes, tanks, ships and guns pouring forth from American factories and shipyards.

"So while we honor the military heroes of this war and bestow decorations upon their commanding generals, let us also accord to America's soldiers of production a like expression of our esteem for their marvelous accomplishments in the cause of victory. Too often we forget the glorious services of the millions in our impatience with the derelictions of a few.

"In many aircraft plants today ten workers produce as much as a hundred before Pearl Harbor. In the American shipyards a ship or tanker takes to build a merchant vessel or warship has been cut more than half. These great increases in labor productivity are a triumph for the skill of history, and for the American labor movement. And we are proud of it. This is the answer of the free workers of America to Hitler's threat of slave labor, this is the measure of the superiority of toilers whose hearts are in their work over those who labor under the whip of the dictator."

ARMY OFFERS BOOKLET ON CUTBACK PROGRAM

Washington, D. C.—A new booklet for war workers describing Army procurement policy, production cutbacks is being distributed to unions throughout the nation by the War Department.

Designed to give workers a clearer understanding of why certain kinds of production must be curtailed or abandoned just as the United Nations are about to launch their great offensives, the booklet emphasizes that changes in production programs are necessary as the war progresses from one stage to another.

Local unions desiring to obtain the booklet should apply to the Industrial Services Division of the War Department Bureau of Public Relations Room 2E367, The Pentagon, Washington 25, D. C.

PUBLIC WORKS URGED TO OFFSET SLUMP

Cleveland.—Unless America maintains her prosperity in the post-war world, not only the country but also the world will suffer, the National Conference on Social Work was told by Alvin H. Hansen, Professor of Economics at Harvard.

Since "a depression feeds on itself," a converse movement put into operation at the proper time can end will restrain such a collapse, Professor Hansen asserted.

Professor Hansen suggested legislation by Congress for a series of future public undertakings which would become operative at the first indications of a dangerous slump in capital outlay.

McENTEE CHOSEN FOR METAL TRADES POST

Washington, D. C.—J. McEntee was chosen Secretary-Treasurer of the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor at a meeting of the department's executive board. He succeeds the late Joseph S. McDonough.

Mr. McEntee, who gained national renown for his successful administration as Director of the Civilian Conservation Corps under appointment of President Roosevelt, is a Grand Lodge representative of the International Association of Machinists and a labor member of the National War Labor Board's shipbuilding commission.

VOTE FOR REAFFILIATION GROWS IN ITU POLL

Newark, N. J.—Latest tabulation of returns in the referendum conducted by the International Typographical Union on the question of reaffiliation with the American Federation of Labor shows a majority of 5,612 votes in favor of reaffiliation.

Lewis M. Herrmann, chairman of the Referendum Committee, announced that as of May 26 the vote stood:

For Reaffiliation	25,856
Against	20,243

Mr. Herrmann declared the majority for reaffiliation keeps increasing as each return comes in and he predicted that the I.T.U. will be back in the AFL fold in a short time.

Industry Must Bargain With Unions Or Face Regimentation, Davis Warns

New York City.—Talking turkey to the nation's business leaders, War Labor Board Chairman William H. Davis told them they must bargain collectively with labor unions if they want to forge the government "to the sidelines" after the war ends and peace-time processes resume.

He spoke at the concluding dinner session of a conference of 1,500 employers and representatives of management held at the Hotel Astor under the auspices of the American Management Association to discuss problems of employer-employee relations.

Mr. Davis urged that employers begin at once to plan for sound labor relations after the war in order that Government intervention in this field may be reduced to a minimum.

The task that lies before management and labor now, Mr. Davis said, "is to adapt wartime experience to the needs of peacetime industrial relations, so that we can avoid drastic readjustments when the pressures of war have been removed and the government has, I trust, stepped out of the field of labor arbitration."

The alternative, he warned, would be continued government interference, perhaps in more drastic form.

"When the government moves out of the wartime place it now occupies participant in industrial affairs a vacuum will be created immediately and labor have found nothing to fill its place," he said. "And a whirlwind—

AFL Spurns Party Politics In 1944 National Campaign

Green States AFL Political Policy

Cumberland, Md.—Highlights of President Green's declarations here on the political policy of the American Federation of Labor follow:

This is a national election year and the citizens of America, acting as free men and women, will consider the records of candidates for office and will vote in accordance with their good judgment and the dictates of their conscience.

I know that every one of you is intensely interested in the coming political campaign and, therefore, I wish to take this occasion to explain the important part that the American Federation of Labor and its seven million members will play in it.

Our first concern is to get out the vote. To that end, we have urged every central body in the country to organize committees charged with the duty of seeing to it that every American Federation of Labor member registers in accordance with the law of his community so that he may be able to vote on election day. These same committees will also see to it that our members actually go to the polls and cast their ballots on election day.

In seeking to get out a full vote, the American Federation of Labor is contributing toward good citizenship.

We do not attempt to dictate to our members as to how they shall vote. The American Federation of Labor now, as in the past, follows a strictly nonpartisan political policy. We give no blanket endorsement to any political party or to any national ticket. We have enough confidence in the good sense and good judgment of our members to let them decide these great questions for themselves.

The American Federation of Labor does endorse candidates for Congress, based upon their voting records and legislation which is of vital interest to the welfare of the nation's workers. These endorsements are given regardless of the political affiliation of the candidates and solely upon our careful records of the candidate's past actions. We have found from past experience that by this method we can help to elect legislative bodies which are friendly and sympathetic to the cause of labor.

There are some in the ranks of labor who are anxious to get more actively involved in partisan politics. Such individuals would sacrifice the future stability of their organizations for the sake of temporary expediency.

The American Federation of Labor has, and always will be, as long as it is a permanent organization which has become a part of the institutional life of America. We refuse to tie ourselves as the tail to the kite of any political party. To us so is to invite destruction in the event of the defeat of a particular political party or candidate.

We are in business to stay, no matter which party wins. We are confident that whether the Democratic or Republican Party is elected to power, the prestige and influence of the American Federation of Labor will not suffer but will be enhanced by our non-partisan policy.

Let us remember, even in the heat of the political campaign, that American will go on regardless of which side wins. It is our supreme task, with redoubled vigor and intensity, to get on—on to the winning of the war and the winning of the peace and the building of a finer, a freer and a more secure life for humanity in the immediate future.

Vinson Promises Action To Halt Rapacious Clothing Profiteers

Washington, D. C.—Action to curb the rapacity of clothing manufacturers and dealers was promised by Fred M. Vinson, economic stabilization director, when the hearings were opened by the House Banking Committee.

Simultaneously, the Department of Labor, reporting an increase in living costs in April, devoted several paragraphs to the soaring cost of wearing apparel, especially of children's grades.

Some stores have boosted prices more than 100 percent on certain kinds of clothing, Mr. Vinson's action bureau disclosed. Women's cotton house dresses and other garments made of cotton have borne the brunt of the gouge.

Vinson admitted that OPA regulations permitted manufacturers to upgrade their lines and their prices. But the War Production Board will shortly issue regulations requiring manufacturers to produce cloth for overalls and other work clothes.

To prevent upgrading of other clothing, the regulations will stipulate that the cloth must meet specified standards.

AFL Offers Homage To War Dead By Urging Better Break For Living

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor paid homage to those who have given their lives in this war for the defense of their country by demanding a full measure of economic protection for the millions of servicemen who will come home safely when the fighting ends.

Declaring that "the best memorial to the dead is what we do for the living," the AFL urged a comprehensive program including "jobs for all," demobilization pay, unemployment compensation, federal aid to education and apprenticeship training. The Federation's position was discussed on the May 28 "Labor For Victory" program.

United States Senator Robert M. LaFollette explained the provisions of the "G.I." bill and other legislative measures enacted to help servicemen get back to their former jobs or into new ones. He added:

"Federal aid, state aid and programs of various kinds are fine as far as they go, but the full measure of economic security will be given to our men and women returning from the service will want and expect depends upon the kind of an economic system we have when we reconvert America's economy from a war-time to a peace-time basis.

"We must not yield to the powerful pressure of those who would deliberately throttle America's productive capacity which has been so greatly expanded to meet our war production needs.

"The challenge before us is to put our entire productive capacity at work. We insist, rather, on the right to the opportunity for independent enterprise in private industry. We must utilize the energies and talents of every able-bodied American for productive jobs if we are to get and have in producing the tools of war."

The AFL's policies in behalf of servicemen was presented by James B. Burns, President of the American Federation of Government Employees and a member of the American Legion's National Labor Relations Committee.

Mr. Burns warned against a post-war depression which, he said, would happen if businessmen decided to "crawl into a shell and wait for better days." Such a depression, he emphasized, would "slam the door of opportunity in the faces of our returning veterans and force millions of our workers into breadlines." It can only be avoided if industry, labor and the government all cooperate in a program of cooperative planning and action to meet the nation's post-war needs.

"Therefore, the American Federation of Labor calls upon the leaders of industry and the leaders of our government to get busy at once," Mr. Burns declared. "There is not much time to lose. The war may end far sooner than we expect. And the tragic truth is that America is no better prepared for peace now than it was the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor."

A great deal can be done immediately, Mr. Burns declared, to prevent a post-war depression. Mr. Burns insisted. He urged, as a starting point, enactment of the Kilgore Bill which would start the post-war program moving without delay.

This measure, he explained, would afford democratic representation to industry, labor and agriculture on the government setup created to draft post-war policies.

"That means," he said, "the mobilization of a vast army of willing collaborators to carry out the post-war program instead of confusion and dissatisfaction with orders issued from on high."

The private efforts of AFL unions to safeguard the job seniority of men in the armed service and the growing movement to open the doors of union membership to returning troops without payment of initiation fees.

TRUMAN OFFERS PLAN FOR RECONVERSION NOW

New York City.—All materials not required for war should be released immediately for production of needed civilian goods "to lessen the danger of inflation from suppressed buying power," Senator Harry S. Truman, chairman of the Senate War Investigating Committee, declared in an address here.

The program outlined, he said, would "permit an orderly and gradual resumption of peacetime operations without the shock and violence to the economy that would result from artificially damming blocking it until the end of all or part of the war."

Green Says Labor Dare Not Risk Future On Outcome Of Elections

Cumberland, Md.—The American Federation of Labor will not gamble with the future security of the nation's workers by subordinating their interests to the fortunes of any particular political party, President William Green declared here.

In a timely and significant address, delivered before the convention of the Maryland State and District of Columbia Federation of Labor, Mr. Green served notice that the AFL will be extremely active in the coming political campaign, but along strictly non-partisan lines.

"Ours is a permanent organization which has become a part of the institutional life of America," Mr. Green said. "We refuse to tie ourselves as the tail to the kite of any political party. To us so is to invite destruction in the event of the defeat of a particular political party or candidate.

"We are in business to stay, no matter which party wins. We are confident that whether the Democratic or Republican Party is elected to power, the prestige and influence of the American Federation of Labor will not suffer but will be enhanced by our non-partisan policy."

By inference, Mr. Green assailed the violently partisan activities of the CIO Political Action Committee. He said:

"There are some in the ranks of labor who are anxious to get more actively involved in partisan politics. Such individuals would sacrifice the future stability of their organizations for the sake of temporary expediency."

In outlining the political plans of the Federation, Mr. Green emphasized that the winning of the war and the winning of the peace depend upon the election of capable public officials "who are conscious of their responsibilities to the common people of the country and are concerned over the protection and conservation of human rights as well as property rights."

The Federation's first objective, he said, is to get out the vote of its members. To accomplish this, he explained, central bodies affiliated with the AFL in every city are organizing non-partisan political committees which will see to it that members register and go to the polls on election day.

The AFL is contributing toward good citizenship by such efforts to get out the vote, Mr. Green maintained.

He insisted that the Federation does not and will not attempt to dictate to its members as to how they shall vote. It does not and will not, he added, give a blanket endorsement to any political party or to any national ticket.

"The American Federation of Labor does endorse candidates for Congress, based upon their voting records on legislation which is of vital interest to the welfare of the nation's workers," Mr. Green continued. "These endorsements are given regardless of the political affiliation of the candidates and solely upon our careful records of the candidate's past actions. We have found from past experience that by this method we can help to elect legislative bodies which are friendly and sympathetic to the cause of labor."

Mr. Green condemned the fact that many of the workers are deprived of the right to vote along with their fellow Americans merely because they happen to live within the District of Columbia. He told the convention the AFL stands ready to assist any constructive effort by the State-District Federation to correct this unfair discrimination by legislation or Constitutional Amendment.

Governor Herbert R. O'Conor, of Maryland, who spoke on the same program with Mr. Green, commended the American Federation of Labor for its many contributions to the success of the war effort, for its leadership in post-war planning and for its primary allegiance to the welfare of the nation as a whole.

The convention re-elected Robert J. Buxbaum, of Baltimore, president and Frank J. Coleman, of Washington, D. C., secretary.

WAR WORKERS WILL GET TIME OFF TO VOTE

Washington, D. C.—War or no war, workers are going to get a chance to vote in November, The War Production Board will shortly call on employers to give time off to their employes, regardless of production problems.

Voting is viewed as a privilege by the WPB which rightfully contends "it marks the difference between us and our enemies."